

Message Text

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60

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07

L-03 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 EB-11 AGR-20 TRSE-00 COME-00 INT-08

SCI-06 AEC-11 AECE-00 H-03 CEQ-02 EPA-04 SS-15 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6950

CONFIDENTIAL MEXICO 5117

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MX

SUBJECT: SALINITY: PUBLICITY ON SECOND ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS
AND REACTION THERETO

REF: MEXICO 5067

1. JUNE 12 EL UNIVERSAL CARRIES LEAD ARTICLE WRITTEN BY JORGE AVILES RANDOLPH HEADLINED "MEXICO WILL ASK 800 MILLION (PESOS) INDEMNIFICATION FOR MEXICALI VALLEY FARMERS". IN ADDITION TO RESTATEMENT OF HEADLINE, ARTICLE ALLEGES THAT GOM POSITION CONTINUES TO BE FOR "SAME QUALITY" WATERS, FULL SUBSTITUTION FOR 122 MILLION CUBIC METERS NOW BEING WASTED, AND GUARANTEE THAT MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS WILL NOT BE INVOLVED IN CONSTRUCTION OF DESALTING PLANT "WHICH WOULD BE POWERED BY ATOMIC ENERGY". (JULY 11 PRESS SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED DUPONT, WESTINGHOUSE AND GULF OIL AS TRANSNATIONALS WHICH MIGHT BE INVOLVED.) ARTICLE STATES THAT LATEST ROUND OF TALKS CAME TO NAUGHT SINCE THE "MINIMUM REQUISITES OF MEXICAN NATION WERE NOT SATISIFIED". AUTHOR OF ARTICLE, TERMING HIS SOURCE AS "MAGNIFICENT", FURTHER STATED THAT RESULTS HAVE LEFT PARTICULARLY SOUR TASTE AMONG MEXICAN LEGISLATORS WHO HAVE DISCUSSED PROBLEM OVER LONG PERIOD OF

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TIME IN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS.

2. EXCELSIOR OF JUNE 12 CARRIES NEGATIVE EDITORIAL HEADLINED "INEXHAUSTABLE SALT". EDITORIAL STATES THAT MEXICAN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES HAVE COMMENTED THAT MOST RECENT ROUND OF TALKS HAD NOT GONE AS WELL AS THEY HAD HOPED. EDITORIAL ENDS BY STATING THAT "...EVEN THOUGH US PROPOSALS HAVE REMAINED SECRET, ... CONTROVERSIAL POINTS ARE COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES CAUSED, NON-INTERVENTION IN PROPOSED DESALTING PLANT BY MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES WHICH HAVE STRONG INTERESTS IN MEXICO, AND THAT BRINE BE DISCHARGED TO PACIFIC OCEAN AND NOT TO GULF OF CALIFORNIA IN ORDER TO AVOID MAJOR ECOLOGICAL ALTERATIONS..." EXCELSIOR EDITORIALLY SUPPORTS THIS SUPPOSED GOM NEGOTIATING STANCE.

3. EL SOL ALSO CARRIES JULY 12 EDITORIAL WHICH STARTS WITH ADMISSION THAT OVERNIGHT SOLUTION TO COMPLEX PROBLEM SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED. EDITORIAL ALSO RECOGNIZES THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS WANT TO RESOLVE PROBLEM AND HAVE SPARED NO EFFORT TO DO SO. "DIFFERENCES BEGIN WITH THE HOW, THE WHEN AND THE WHEREWITHAL. ...THERE SEEMS TO BE COMPLETE ACCORD (ON CONSTRUCTION OF DESALTING PLANT) BUT NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE CONCERNING SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS: WILL PLANT BE OPERATED BY MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES? WILL US NOT PAY COMPENSATION TO MEXICALI VALLEY FARMERS FOR ENORMOUS DAMAGE CAUSED BY SALINITY...? WE ARE CERTAIN THAT IF NO CONCRETE RESULTS WERE REACHED DURING THIS SERIES OF NEGOTIATIONS, THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT ALL POSSIBILITIES HAVE BEEN FORECLOSED AND THAT PROBLEM WILL NOT BE RESOLVED. WE BELIEVE THAT GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN MEXICO AND US AND GOOD WILL DEMONSTRATED BY PRESIDENT NIXON WILL PERMIT EARLY ARRIVAL AT CONCILIATORY FORMULA".

4. COMMENT: THE MISINFORMATION APPEARING IN THE LOCAL PRESS YESTERDAY AND TODAY IS A SOURCE OF CONCERN BOTH TO THE EMBASSY AND THE MEXICAN FORSECRETARIAT. AT RECEPTION YESTERDAY EVENING, AMBASSADOR GONZALEZ PARRODI, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO FONSECRETARY RABASA, TOLD POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT FONSECRETARIAT WAS UNHAPPY AND PERPLEXED AT THE INCORRECT REPORTS ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THEIR TREATMENT IN THE MEXICAN PRESS IMPLIED CRITICISM OF RABASA FOR NOT HAVING SUCCEEDED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. GONZALEZ PARRODI SAID HE HAD CALLED AMBASSADOR DE OLLOQUI YESTERDAY TO TRY TO CONFIDENTIAL

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LEARN THE SOURCE OF THESE REPORTS DE OLLOQUI HAD SAID THAT NOBODY IN THE MEXICAN EMBASSY HAD BEEN TALKING TO REPORTERS. GONZALEZ PARRODI SUGGESTED TO POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT PERHAPS THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD GET TOGETHER WITH RABASA TO CONSIDER WHETHER A JOINT STATEMENT CLARIFYING THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND CORRECTING THE MISINFORMATION MIGHT NOT BE A GOOD IDEA. EMBASSY CONCURS IN THIS SUGGESTION AS THE PRESS REACTION HERE HAS BEEN VERY NEGATIVE AND COULD RESULT IN

ADDITIONAL PRESSURES ON GOM TO TAKE A HARD LINE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.
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